

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Reserve
aHD196
.T4C62

SPECIAL REPORT

HISTORICAL & ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES TEXAS COASTAL BASINS



TYPE IV COOPERATIVE RIVER BASIN SURVEY

by

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AUGUST 1975

AD-33 Bookplate
(1-43)

NATIONAL

**A
G
R
I
C
U
L
T
U
R
A
L**



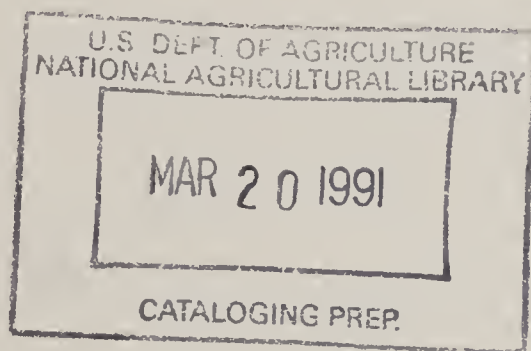
LIBRARY

COOPERATIVE RIVER BASIN SURVEY

TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

SPECIAL REPORT

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES



August 1975

951144

SPECIAL REPORT

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

of the

TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Title</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
ABSTRACT	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose and Scope	1
Description of the Area	2
Relationship to the Rest of the Report	6
LAND RESOURCE AREAS	9
GEOLOGY	14
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	22
ARCHEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	36
RESULTS OF THE SURVEY	40
SUMMARY	49
REFERENCES	51

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
1	Geologic Time Scale	18
2	Distribution of Recorded Archeological and Historical Sites	48

LIST OF PLATES

<u>Plate Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
1	Study Area	3
2	Land Resource Areas	11
3	Prehistoric Indians	27
4	Indians of 1830	29
5	Distribution of Recorded Historical Sites	37
6	Distribution of Recorded Archeological Sites	41

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
1	Generalized Geologic Cross Section	15

LIST OF PHOTOS

<u>Photo Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
1	Mission Espiritu Santo	ix
2	Sample of an Excavation	7
3	Sample of Artifacts	7
4	Excavation of Burials	23
5	Burial from Excavation	23

ABSTRACT

This report is a compilation and extrapolation of the spatial distribution of historical and archeological sites in the Texas Coastal Basins. The report identifies 2,678 recorded archeological sites and 319 historical sites. It also attempts to make tentative predictions of possible occurrence of unrecorded sites.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report was initiated and prepared by the Soil Conservation Service. Assistance from SCS Field Offices in the Texas Coastal Basins was invaluable. The Soil Conservation Service would also like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance provided by Ms. Carolyn Spock of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at the University of Texas, Austin; and Warren Lynn and Tommy Medlin of the Texas Historical Commission, Austin.

Photo 1



Mission Espiritu Santo near Golaid (photo courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Scope

This report, which was prepared in consonance with the overall objectives of the Texas Coastal Basins study, presents data which will enable decision makers to assess the effects of water and related land resource planning on historical and archeological resources.

This special report was initiated with the express purpose of recognizing cultural resources in the study area at an early stage of planning needed projects. By this method it is proposed that these projects can be planned "around" more of our cultural resources instead of "through the middle" of them. Should it be impossible to totally avoid all areas of cultural significance it is hoped that early recognition will at least serve the worthwhile purpose of providing more time to develop plans for protection or mitigation of the loss of these resources thereby avoiding the costly, and many times inadequate "last minute rush" of salvage operations. Also it is felt that much time and expense can be saved by preventing the relocation of projects when

significant cultural resources are encountered in advanced stages of planning or even after construction has begun.

Description of the Area

The Texas Coastal Basins (Plate 1) are located entirely within the State of Texas and include all of 24 counties and portions of 22 counties. The area borders the Gulf of Mexico and includes all of the coastal basins and intervening areas between the Lower Rio Grande Valley and the Sabine River Basin. It lies at the lower end of the Texas Gulf Region as used in the framework planning program of the Water Resources Council.

The study area is about 380 miles long and averages about 85 miles wide. It includes approximately 20,733,400 acres of land and 1,577,000 acres of water bodies over 40 acres in size. Barrier islands stretch along the coastline separating the Gulf of Mexico from numerous bays and estuaries. The area is characterized by the low topographic relief which is typical of the entire Gulf Coastal Plain. Elevations range from sea level to about 900 feet.

The climate is humid to subhumid. Average annual rainfall ranges from 55 inches at Beaumont to 26 inches at Kingsville. The average length of the growing season varies from 319 days in Kenedy County to 241 days in Tyler County. The average annual temperature ranges

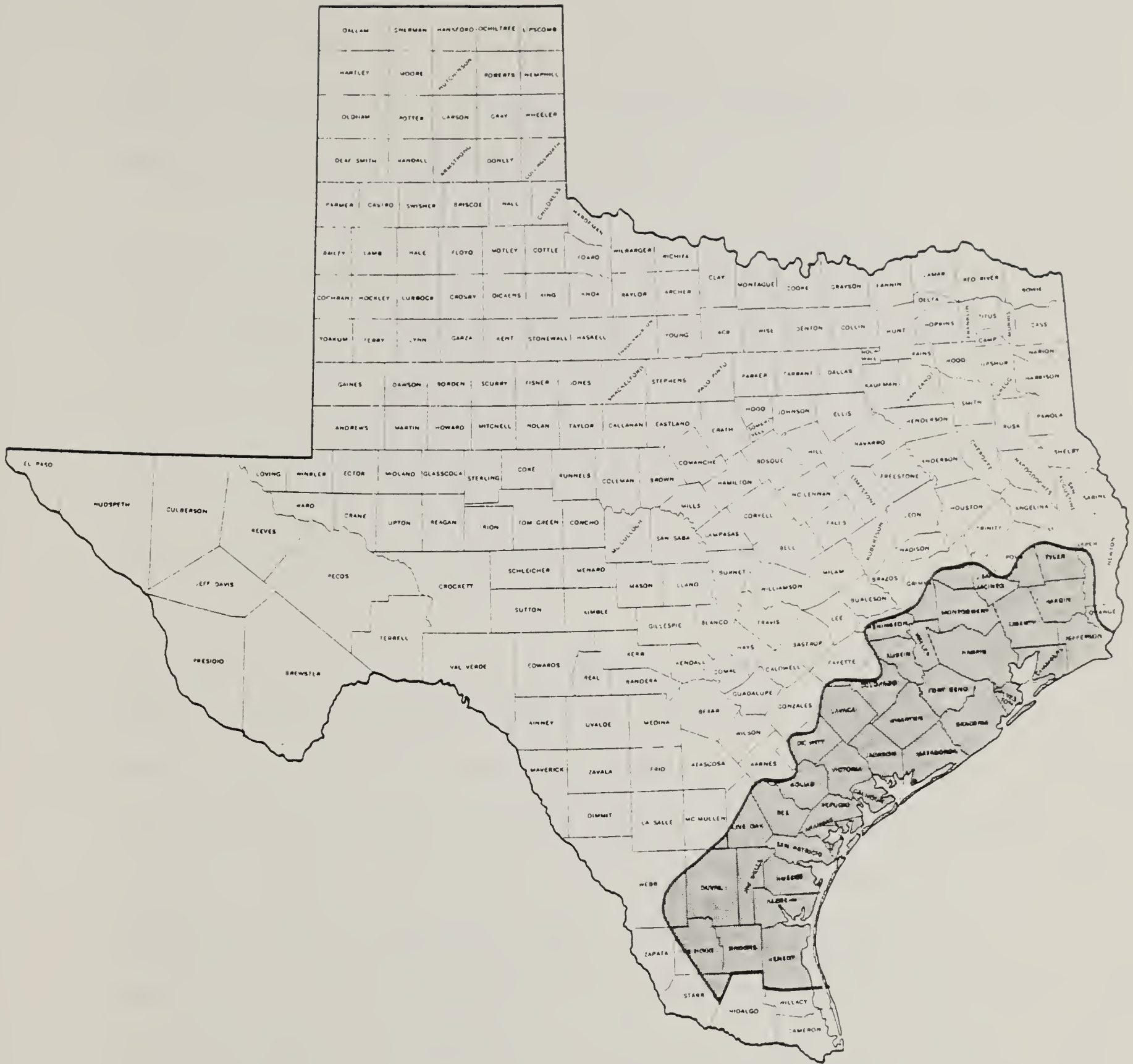


Plate 1
STUDY AREA
TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
TEMPLE, TEXAS

from about 70 degrees at Beaumont to 74 degrees at Corpus Christi. Except on rare occasions sea breezes prevent extremely high summer temperatures over most of the study area.

The geologic formations which crop out in the study area range in age from Recent on the coast to Eocene (about 46 million years old) in the most inland areas. They consist of relatively unconsolidated clay, sand, and gravel and dip gently towards the coast. The most significant geologic structural features are salt domes near the coast which are important sources of mineral wealth.

Vegetation consists of forest, savannah, prairie, and marsh, with habitat gradients developed from plant communities which are dynamic and diverse. These interspersed vegetative patterns are greatly influenced by a variety of land use trends and the amount of annual rainfall associated with natural features. Forest lands occur throughout, with concentrated areas of pine and hardwood in the upper zone, a variety of water-tolerant hardwoods and post oak in the middle zones, and chiefly live oak in the lower zone. Rangeland is confined to the more arid lower and middle zones. Prairies are found in all zones and areas of rice and grain sorghums are a haven for waterfowl. Marshes are found throughout the coastline. Zones of grasses, both freshwater and salt, are developed relative to sea level elevation.

The Texas Coastal Basins is an area of dynamic urban and industrial growth. A third of the State's population and economic activity is concentrated along the Texas Gulf Coast. The rapid growth of existing areas will be pressed to provide utilities, transportation, and amenities as well as dependable sources of freshwater. This expansion could have direct impacts on the archeological resources within the concentrated areas of the Texas Coastal Basins.

Relationship to the Rest of the Report

The plan for the development of the resources of the Texas Coastal Basins to meet existing and projected human needs requires the blending of information related to all of the natural resources of the basin. The data presented in this report were developed as a guide for the preservation and improvement of historical and archeological resources consistent with the stated study objectives. In this regard, the data are related to the factors and influences which are presented in detail in the other special reports. Historical and archeological resources are an integral part of resource planning, and this report should complement other reports when selecting alternatives for development and use of all resources.

Photo 2



Excavation at an archeological site in the Texas Coastal Basins Study Area (photo courtesy Texas Historical Commission)

Photo 3



Sample of artifacts recovered from excavation (photo courtesy Texas Historical Commission)

LAND RESOURCE AREAS

Man has always been tied to the land - for food, fiber, and shelter. Differences and similarities between land types (soil, topography, vegetation, etc.) and the habitat they comprize determine what use man will make of them. A land resource area is a geographical area characterized by similarities of soil, topography, climate, and vegetation. The more than 20 million acres of land in the Texas Coastal Basins are endowed with a variety of natural resources. The study area includes portions of six land resource areas which are shown on Plate 2. A brief description of each land resource area follows.

The gently rolling to nearly level Rio Grande Plain (83) extends into the study area from the south and west and covers about 28 percent of the area. The climax vegetation of this semiarid area was primarily tall bunchgrasses. Presently the vegetation is dominated by various thorny shrubs commonly included in the general term "chaparral". Mesquite trees are common over much of the area with pricklypear present in varying densities. The soils are underlain by a caliche layer characteristic of soils developed under low rainfall. Moderately deep sandy soils range from slightly acid to neutral.

The rolling topography occcupied by the Texas Blackland Prairie (86) occupies five percent of the study area and lies in the

subhumid climatic zone. Soils range from a brown medium acid to a moderately alkaline sticky clay. The native vegetation is made up of tall bunchgrasses and in some areas the post oak and blackjack oak have encroached from the adjoining oak belt. Along the flood plains of major streams are found oak, elm, cottonwood, and some native pecan trees. Much of the blackland prairie has gone from native prairie to cropland, and because of extensive soil erosion, into pastureland. Much of the area is now covered with introduced grasses.

The Texas Claypan (87), commonly called the "Post Oak Belt", covers about eight percent of the Texas Coastal Basins, and is mainly rolling upland areas covered by a savannah containing scattered stands of post oak and blackjack oak intermixed with yaupon and other underbrush. Bunchgrasses grow on more open sites. Bottom lands support larger, more vigorous growing trees, and a wide variety of cool season grasses. Pecan trees are prevalent in some localities. Upland soil profiles usually have a thin, slightly acid layer of sandy loam over a dense clayey subsoil. These soils are droughty and the clayey subsoil impairs plant root development. The soils along major watercourses are acid to calcareous and range from loamy to clayey in texture. This land resource area lies mainly in the subhumid climatic zone.

- 83 RIO GRANDE PLAIN
- 86 TEXAS BLACKLAND PRAIRIE
- 87 TEXAS CLAYPAN AREA
- 133 SOUTHERN COASTAL PLAIN
- 150 GULF COAST PRAIRIES
- 151 GULF COAST MARSH

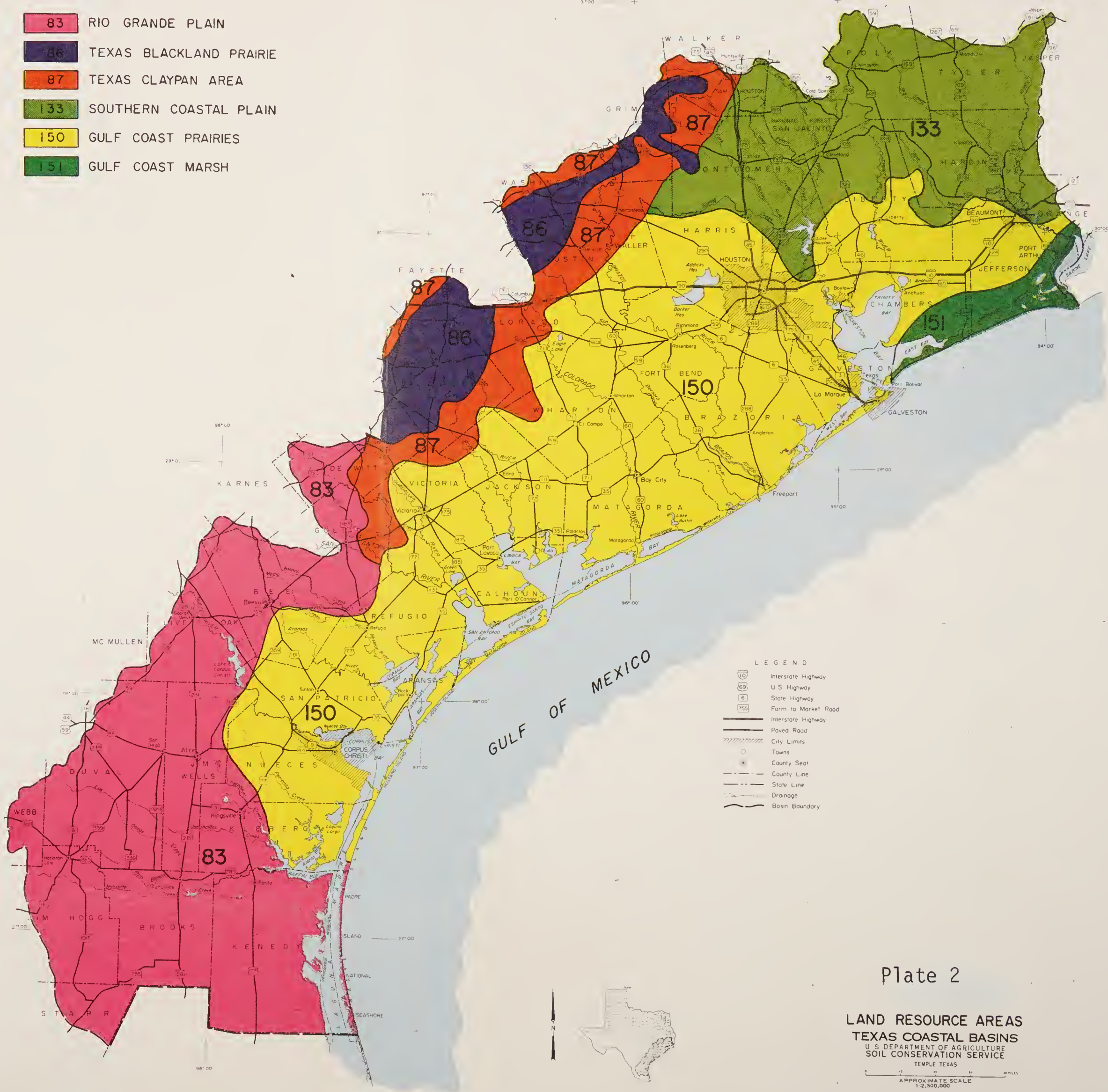


Plate 2

LAND RESOURCE AREAS
TEXAS COASTAL BASINS
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
 TEMPLE, TEXAS

APPROXIMATE SCALE
 1:2,500,000

The Southern Coastal Plain (133) occupies approximately 16 percent of the study area and is within the humid climatic zone. It is a gently rolling area covered with mixed pine and hardwood forests. The flood plains along streams contain a higher density of hardwood species than pine. Alluvial soils support a variety of fruit and nut bearing plants that provide wildlife food. Introduced grasses such as bermudagrass and bahiagrass have been established in cleared areas. The soils are mostly acid, light colored to dark gray sands or sandy loams.

The Gulf Coast Prairies (150) occupies 41 percent of the study area extending from the Neches River to Baffin Bay. The surface is flat for several miles inland from the coast. The soils are primarily calcareous clay loams near the coast becoming slightly acid and more sandy farther inland. The clay loam and clay soils have nearly level surfaces with slow to very slow drainage. The native vegetation consists of coarse grasses with a narrow fringe of trees along the streams. Much of this area is now covered by improved pasture grasses and cultivated crops. The climate ranges from humid to semiarid.

The Gulf Coast Marsh (151) includes a narrow strip of wet lowland adjacent to the coast in the humid climatic zone comprising about two percent of the study area. The soils have little development and represent two extremes in soil texture. A gray mottled wet

clay soil occupies the low flat areas that merge with the tidal marsh. A deep, loose, nearly white sand is found on low ridges and along the beaches. The water table is near or above the surface during most of the year. The vegetation is water tolerant plants, mostly sedges, saltgrass, and other grasses.

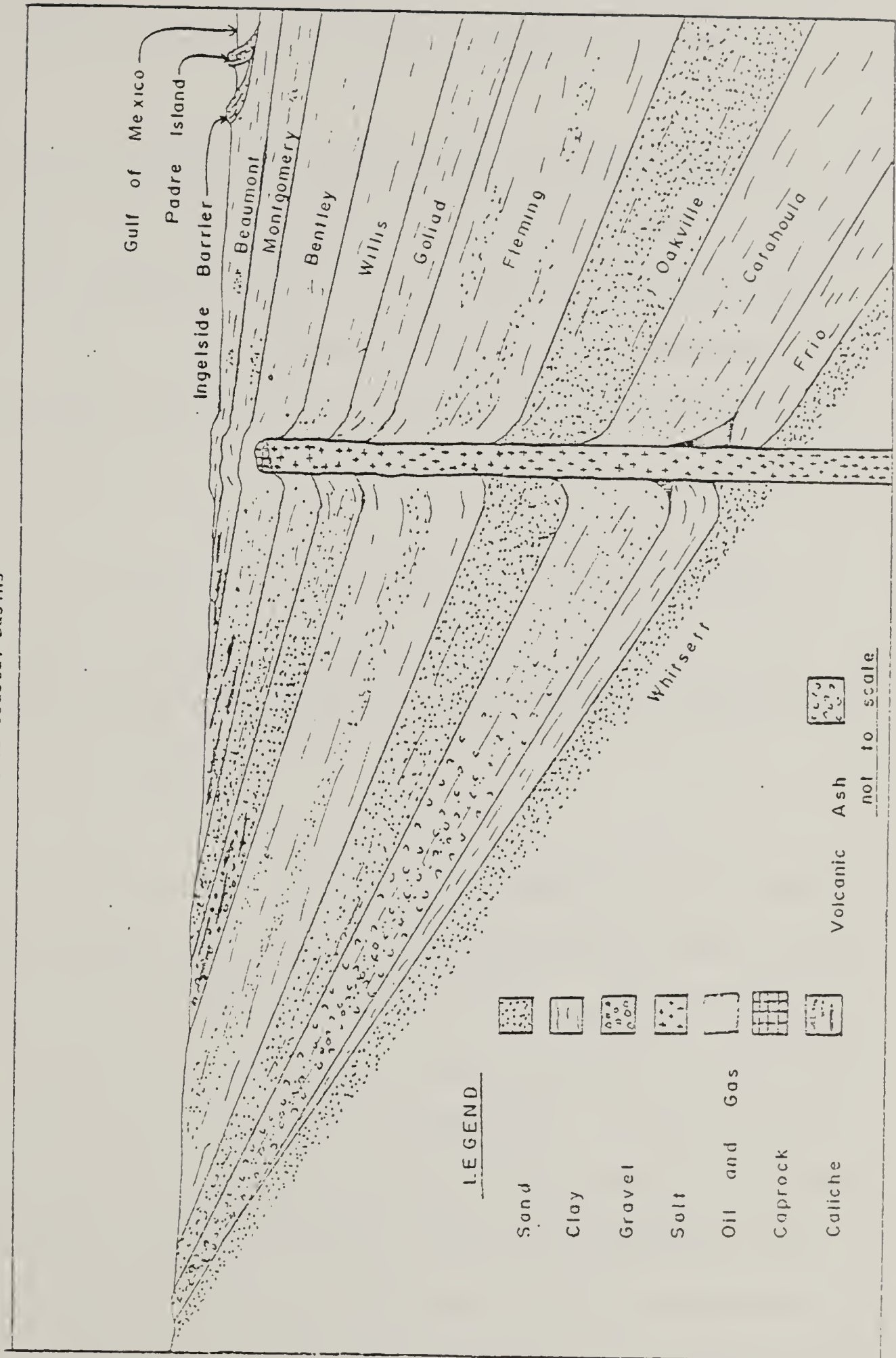
GEOLOGY

The different geologic formations are important to man today for their mineral contents just as they have been since man first appeared upon the scene. Early man used minerals such as flint, quartzite, obsidian, and sandstone to make implements and weapons; iron pyrites and flint started his fires; later the use of metallic ores ushered in the copper, bronze, and iron ages; many different minerals were ground and used as pigment for body decoration, cosmetics, and to leave a record of his passing with pictographs and hieroglyphics; and the naturally formed caves and rock shelters of certain formations have provided shelter from the elements and from enemies since his earliest days on earth.

The geologic formations present in the Texas Coastal Basins are sedimentary in origin and range in age from late Eocene to Recent, cropping out in bands nearly parallel with the coast. The youngest deposits border the Gulf and successively older beds crop out toward the interior. In vertical section (Figure 1.) geologic

FIGURE 1

Generalized Geologic Cross Section
Texas Coastal Basins



formations underlying the study area occur as a series of gently dipping, truncated wedges that thicken towards the coast.

The most inland and oldest formations were deposited about 56 million years ago. At this time the shoreline lay about 110 miles inland of its present position. Since that time there has been continual rising of the continental land mass and subsidence of the offshore area resulting in a retreat of the shoreline to its present position.

The geologic time scale (Table 1) shows the relationship and relative ages of the geologic units. Also shown on this table are intervals during which erosion (valley cutting), rather than deposition, was occurring.

A discussion of the individual formations begins with the oldest rocks, those belonging to the Tertiary System which range in age from 54 million years before present to one million years before present. At the time the oldest of these formations, the Whitsett, was deposited, the ocean shore lay inland about 110 miles from its present position. Succeeding formations, including the subsurface Frio, Catahoula, Oakville, Fleming, and Goliad formations were laid down along a withdrawing shoreline. Various environments existed during deposition of these formations, including periods of high rainfall, low rainfall, and extensive volcanic activity.

TABLE 1
Geologic Time Scale
Texas Coastal Basins

System	Series	Years Before Present	Unit or Interval
Quaternary	Recent		Alluvium
			Barrier Island
		20,000	Sand sheet
	Recent or late (?) Pleistocene	40,000	Deweyville
		62,000	Valley Cutting
	Pleistocene	100,000	Beaumont
		160,000	Valley Cutting
			Montgomery
		290,000	Montgomery-Bentley
		350,000	Valley Cutting
		670,000	Bentley
		740,000	Valley Cutting
			*Qwc Willis
			*Qwl
		1 million	
Tertiary	Pliocene		Valley Cutting
		12 million	Goliad
	Miocene		Fleming
			Oakville
		26 million	Catahoula
	Oligocene	37 million	Non-deposition
	Eocene	54 million	Whitsett

Sources: (1) Hugh A. Bernard, Rufus J. Leblanc, "Resume of the Quaternary Geology of the Northwestern Gulf of Mexico Province", 1965.
(2) United States Department of Interior, Geological Survey, "Geologic Time", 1970.
* See legend on sheet 1, plate 4 of the Main Report.

The Catahoula Formation was deposited during a period of extensive volcanic activity and consists of about 82 percent volcanic ash.

Most of the study area is located on outcrops of formations belonging to the Pleistocene Series of the Quaternary System. The Pleistocene period of geologic time is often referred to as the Great Ice Age and began about one million years ago. Within the Pleistocene time span, the "water balance" between the land and the sea was constantly changing as continental glaciers waxed and waned, resulting in sea level fluctuations of up to 450 feet. Four cycles of sea level fluctuations are correlated with the Pleistocene formations which crop out in the study area. Simultaneous with the fluctuating sea levels was a continuing rise of the continental land mass and crustal subsidence offshore in the Gulf Coast Geosyncline as great thicknesses of sediments accumulated. The four surface and associated formations from oldest to youngest are named the Fleming, Bentley, Montgomery, and Beaumont. These four sedimentary formations are correlated with deposition during a rising sea level or interglacial stage. The eroding of these surface (valley cutting) took place during lowering sea level (glacial periods). During each glacial period the sea level dropped about 450 feet from its highest level during the preceding interglacial period. The drop exposed most of the continental shelf and the rivers cut valleys through it to depths of more than 100 feet.

The last major rise in sea level began about 20,000 years ago and marks the beginning of the Recent Series of deposits. During this rise, which ended about 6,000 years before present, the sea drowned the lower ends of the river valleys, forming bays and estuaries along the coast. The rise of the sea in the lower parts of the river valleys weakened the river currents causing them to deposit their load of clay, sand, silt, and gravel in the drowned valleys. As the rivers meandered back and forth across their wide low gradient flood plains, they deposited clay, sand, and gravel to create the Recent Formation. Regional gradient changes have caused the rivers to build a series of terraces which are mapped as the Deweyville Formation and Fluvial Terraces undivided. This process has continued to the present.

Tectonic features in the study area include very low, eroded fault scarps which are not shown on the geology map and salt mounds, hills, domes, or islands which are from 1 to 200 feet higher than the surrounding terrain. Some of the more important salt domes are shown on the map. The salt domes are topographic expressions of piercement-type salt plugs. Most of the structural features in the study area are related to intrusive salt plugs, including some of the faults. The intrusion of the salt has created structures favorable to the accumulation of salt, oil, gas, gypsum, and sulphur in deposits which are of high economic value to the study area. The

geologic cross section, Figure 1, shows the structure of a typical salt plug intrusion.

Tectonic features of a relatively local nature have been produced as a result of the extraction of oil, gas, sulphur, and water. Notable is the large depression formed at New Gulf on Boling Dome as a result of sulphur extraction by the Frasch process, and the subsidence in the Houston area as a result of ground water withdrawal. The Frasch process consists of the piping of superheated steam down wells to the sulphur bearing rocks which melts the sulphur and permit it to be forced to the surface by compressed air.

Other geologic features in the study area include barrier islands, river deltas, and sand sheet deposits, all of which are still being built or deposited. The outermost barrier islands formed during the last 6,000 years, as a result of the sea level being relatively stable during this period at its present position. They were formed by the accretion of sand and shells from the ocean floor and rivers due to longshore currents and wave action. "Ancient" or "relic" barrier islands are of the Beaumont Formation, recent barrier islands are Barrier Island Deposits. The recent barrier islands are serving as blocks to the movement of sediment into the sea from the rivers and causing the bays and estuaries to become filled with sediment. A comparison of old and new bathometric charts indicates an average

filling rate of about 1.25 feet per century. The activities of man in the last 30 years have probably drastically lowered this rate.

The sand sheet deposits occur mainly in Kenedy County. These consist of northwest trending banner dunes which move inland from the coast towards the northwest forming an eolian plain consisting of migrating sand dunes and intervening "blowout" areas. This eolian plain was formed at about latitude 27 north due to the action of two opposing longshore currents which meet at this point. Sands carried to the Gulf by the Rio Grande River are transported in a northward direction by longshore currents. These currents meet the southwestward currents of the upper coast, which are drifting sands derived from the Brazos and Colorado rivers in a southerly direction. The convergence of these currents results in an excess of shore sands which are thrown up on the shore by wave action and blown inland as a complex of banner dunes.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"Man has certainly made an impression on the Texas Gulf Coast". When we hear statements such as this we think, "Yes, isn't pollution terrible, and isn't industrialization wonderful", and agriculture is possibly somewhere in between. However, we usually fail to think back far enough. Man has been making footprints and technological advances in the marshes, coastal islands, piney woods,

Photo 4



Excavation of burials in Austin County (photo courtesy Texas Archeological Survey, University of Texas at Austin)

Photo 5



Burial from excavation in Austin County. Note dart point imbedded in spinal column. (photo courtesy Texas Archeological Survey, University of Texas at Austin)

post oak savannah, and grassy prairies of this area for at least 7,000 years - probably longer.

The very earliest inhabitants are unknown to us today by name since they existed on the landscape long before written history came along. They undoubtedly had names for themselves, but word-of-mouth history has a way of becoming distorted through time and eventually is obliterated. The earliest inhabitants to be recorded by name date only from the early 16th century, Plate 3. Even at that - these people are known to us today in a generalized group named for their linguistic similarities.

In the southern and central parts of our survey area the Coahuiltecans held sway. Those who inhabited the coastal area and offshore islands are called Karankawans. These people were linked culturally and linguistically to the Hoka-speaking tribes of California (1). They foraged up and down the coast and a few miles inland following game and ripening fruits, nuts, and other vegetal food. They made extensive use of the coastal bays and estuaries utilizing fish and shellfish. The rivers which led away from the coast were followed inland furnishing game, fish, mullusks, fruits, and nuts as well as freshwater. These hunting and gathering peoples evidently practiced no form of agriculture, but they used their environment to its fullest. They ate everything - mesquite beans, pricklypear tunas,

sotol hearts, spiders, ant eggs, worms, deer dung, and some "unmentionables" according to Cabeza de Vaca who lived with them for seven years (1).

Archeological sites attributed to the Coahuiltecan culture reveal the remains of many meals containing such edibles as rabbits, rats, tortoise, and deer (6). At some time in the past buffalo even ventured as far south as Jim Wells County and were included in the diet of these early Texans along with grey wolf, antelope, and wild turkey (7).

By 1830 the picture had changed somewhat (Plate 4). The Coahuiltecan had been replaced by Lipan Apaches, an Athapaskan linguistic group which moved into the region after being driven off the southern plains by Comanches and other enemies (3). The Karankawans were still holding forth on the coast but did not mix well with the newly-arrived settlers or the Apaches and thus were well on the road to extinction. The central portion of this section of Texas was now occupied by the Tonkawa, who probably drifted down from the southern plains as their culture closely resembled that of the Lipan Apache, but their linguistic affiliation was closer to Coahuiltecan (1).

Meanwhile, in the northeastern sector of our project area the earliest inhabitants to be named in history were called Atakapans (1). These early Texans occupied an area roughly north and east of

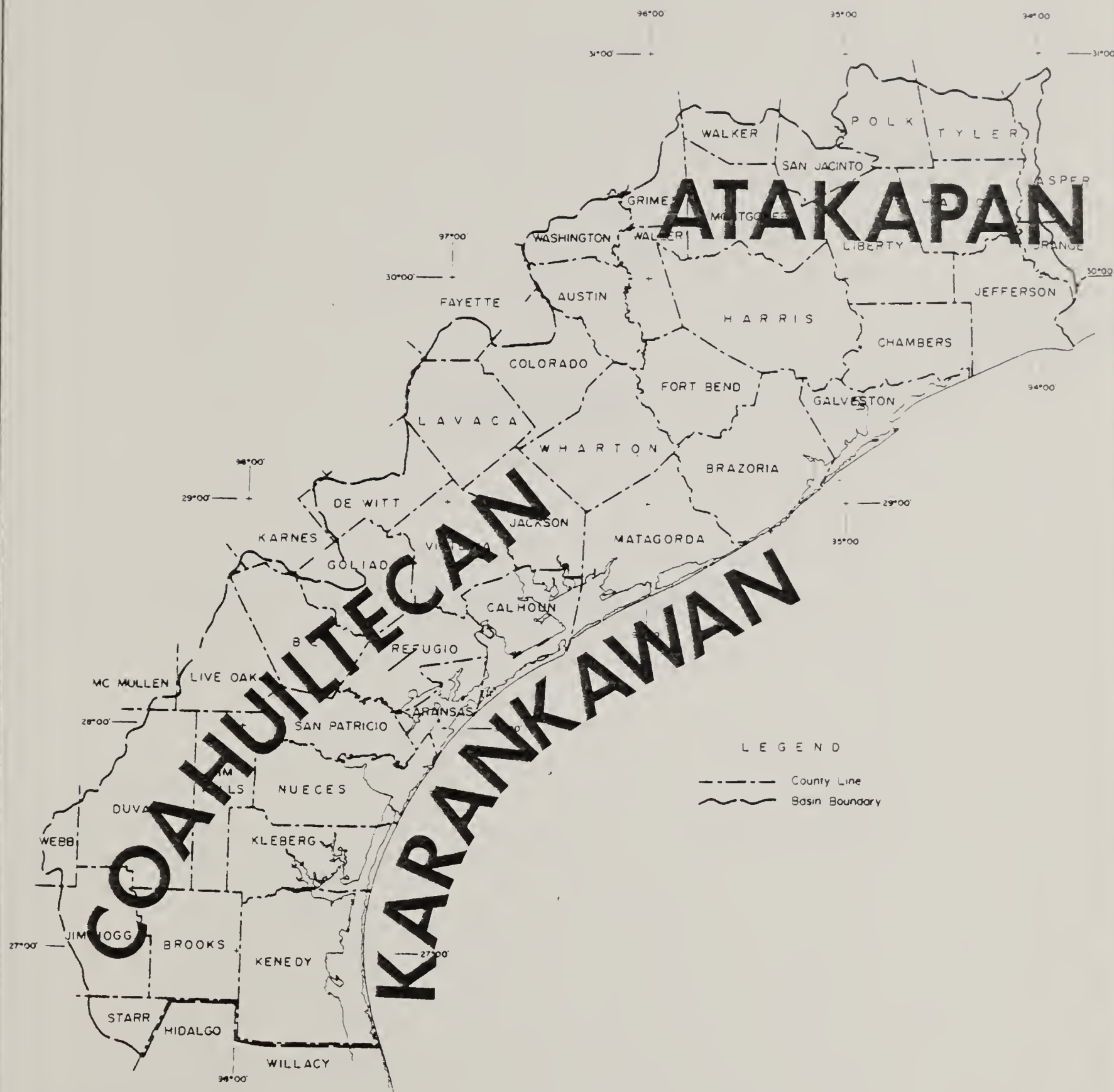
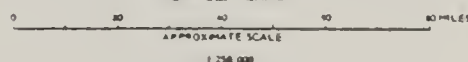


Plate 3
PREHISTORIC INDIANS

TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

TEMPLE, TEXAS



Compiled from USGS Base Map of Texas
and other Cartographic and Photographic

SOURCE: INDIANS OF TEXAS
by W.W. NEWCOMB





Plate 4
 INDIANS OF 1830
 TEXAS COASTAL BASINS
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
 TEMPLE, TEXAS

SOURCE: INDIANS OF TEXAS IN 1830
 by BERLANDIER

Galveston Bay. Their linguistic stock is closely related to the Tunica of Louisiana and Mississippi. Much like their neighbor to the south they were hunters and gatherers - living off the land. No evidence of agriculture for these peoples has been discovered in the archeological record. They are recorded in history as being cannibals - their very name is derived from the Choctaw word for "man-eater".

The environment in this area was much less forbidding than further south. This was a region rich in game, especially deer and bear, also fish and wild plants, nuts, and fruits. By 1830 the Atakapans were listed by band names such as Bidai, Nacisi, and Koasati, and some had become part-time farmers much resembling their northern neighbors, the Caddoes (3).

This region of Texas in historic times had been a veritable "football field" of progress. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Spanish and French fought back and forth over the area for the privilege of "winning the heathen over to Christianity", not to mention the lucrative trade in furs, precious metals, other goods, and the colonization potential that was involved. Later in the 19th century the Texans and the U. S. Government fought with Mexico and the resident Indians for possession of this same richly endowed, well watered, and extremely fertile piece of real estate.

The early Spanish explorer Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda and later the shipwrecked Cabeza de Vaca were the first white men to visit the area. The first settlement was established by Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle, a Frenchman who established Fort St. Louis on Matagorda Bay in the mid 1680's. Due to crop failure, harassment by the Karankawan Indians, and finally the assassination of La Salle by one of his own men, the fort was soon destroyed. When the Spanish found out about the existence of La Salle's fort, they realized they would never be secure in the area until they took possession of it. Therefore, they decided to send priests with military escorts into the area to establish missions. This effort was also doomed to failure due to crop failure, epidemics, and unfriendly Indians. By 1710 the French were again threatening to settle the area, so by 1716 the Spanish had established six missions to meet this threat. In 1721 the French trader Bernard de La Harpe was on the Texas coast. His guide was Simars de Bellisle who had been marooned on the Texas coast in 1719. He was captured by the Akokisas but managed to escape (Newcomb 1961:317-318). La Harpe attempted to establish a trading post on the coast but the hostility of the Indians, probably the Attacapas, made La Harpe abandon his venture and possibly put an end to serious French attempts to control the Texas coast (Bolton 1970:284; Pool 1975:24). From 1716 until about 1820 the Spanish laid claim in one form or another to the area now included in the study area and made ambitious and repeated attempts to colonize it, most of

which were unsuccessful. After 100 years of this effort about the only permanent Spanish settlement in the area was La Bahia (Goliad) which was the location of the Mission La Bahía del Espíritu Santa de Zúñiga and Presidio Nuestra Senora de Loreto. The mission has been restored to its original state and is a significant tourist attraction and historical site.

The first Anglo-American settlement in the study area was established on the Brazos River in 1821 and was called Washington-on-the-Brazos. It was in this year that Mexico achieved independence from Spain. Stephen F. Austin received a colonization grant from the new government in Mexico City in 1823. By 1830 the Mexican government began to realize that a very real threat to its sovereignty in the area existed, if the extensive Anglo-American colonization were allowed to continue; and on April 6, 1830, they issued a decree which forbade further Anglo-American immigration. By 1835 the colonists had begun a revolution which ended in April of 1836 with the defeat of the Mexican army at San Jacinto and the establishment of Texas as an independent republic. Several significant events in the Texas revolution took place within the study area. On March 19, 1836, James W. Fannin, Jr. and about 450 of his men were surrounded by superior Mexican forces and the next day they surrendered. A week later on Palm Sunday, Fannin and his remaining 350 men were executed near the La Bahia mission at Goliad. A historical monument and park mark this spot. The battle of San Jacinto in which Texas won its

independence by the defeat of Santa Anna's army by Sam Houston was fought near where Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River join in Harris County. A tall stone monument overlooks this battleground today.

Several of the early government headquarters were located in the study area. The first Anglo-American capitol of Texas was San Felipe de Austin. The provisional government of Texas met at Washington-on-the-Brazos on March 1, 1836. In this convention all powers of sovereignty were claimed and exercised, a Declaration of Independence was adopted, a constitution was written, and executive officers were inaugurated. Because of the movement of Santa Anna's troops, President Burnet, for convenience, selected Harrisburg on Buffalo Bayou as the temporary capital.

At the approach of Santa Anna, President Burnet, with a part of his cabinet, took refuge on Galveston Island. After the battle of San Jacinto, the Treaty of Velasco was signed at Velasco in Brazoria County, the temporary seat of government. In October of 1836 the first permanent government of the Republic of Texas went into operation at Columbia, also in Brazoria County. In 1836 President Houston ordered the capital moved to Houston in Harris County, where it remained until moved to Austin in 1840.

Almost all the military activity in Texas directly relating to the Civil War occurred within the study area. Galveston was blockaded in 1861 by a Federal force and the Confederate troops evacuated the island. John B. Magruder recaptured the island in 1863. At the Battle of Sabine Pass, the small group of Texan defenders turned back a sizeable naval force; however, the Federal troops occupied Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Aransas Pass, Indianola, and others.

After the war the area saw rapid growth of railroads, industrialization, and agriculture. The first meat packing plant was established at Victoria in 1868. Oil became important to the area as did the development of other mineral resources. In 1901 the Spindletop well near Beaumont blew in as the State's first great gusher, though not its first oil discovery. Spindletop was the forerunner of many large oil fields and of the huge refining and associated industry development that was to mushroom along the coast during the next 70 years.

As can be seen by the above discussion, many of the major historical events and places in Texas are located in the Texas Coastal Basins study area. Many of these events and places have been designated as historically significant points of interest by the Texas State Historical Survey Committee in a continuing effort to locate and preserve these areas (Plate 5). Galveston County has the largest number of such sites. Many of these sites are buildings of

architectural importance such as the Galveston County Courthouse and St. Mary's Cathedral. Others include West Galveston Island, which provided sanctuary for the famous pirate Jean Laffite, and a campsite for the cannibalistic Karankawan Indians.

Harris County contains the second largest recorded number of historically important sites. Some of the most famous of these include the San Jacinto Monument and Battleground, the Battleship Texas, Old Market Square, Lynch's Ferry, and the original Port of Houston. Modern culturally significant sites include the Astrodome, the Astroworld, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's manned spacecraft center. The Houston ship channel is of historical significance, as it made the area a world port.

Scattered throughout the rest of the study area are cemeteries with historical importance, the site of the first sulphur mine in Texas, the first railroad in the State, sites of famous battles of the Texas revolution such as the Goliad massacre, and many others.

ARCHEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Archeological investigations in the Texas Coastal Basins survey area, as in most of Texas and the United States, have been of a highly localized nature. As may be seen later in this report archeological endeavors have been greatly influenced by earth-moving



Plate 5
DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED
HISTORICAL SITES
(JUNE 1975)

TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

0 20 40 60 80 Miles
Approximate Scale
1:3,250,000



SOURCE: Data compiled by Texas Coastal
Basins Planning Staff.

DECEMBER 1975 4-R-35314

projects such as highways, pipelines, dams, and more recently industrial plants. Most of the archeology in Texas has been done in the "shadow of impending doom". This has been the age of "salvage archeology".

A great amount of this work has been generated by government agencies in their endeavor to protect cultural measures from destruction or inundation in water retention projects throughout the State. This trend toward identifying and protecting cultural resources is increasing rapidly since passage of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

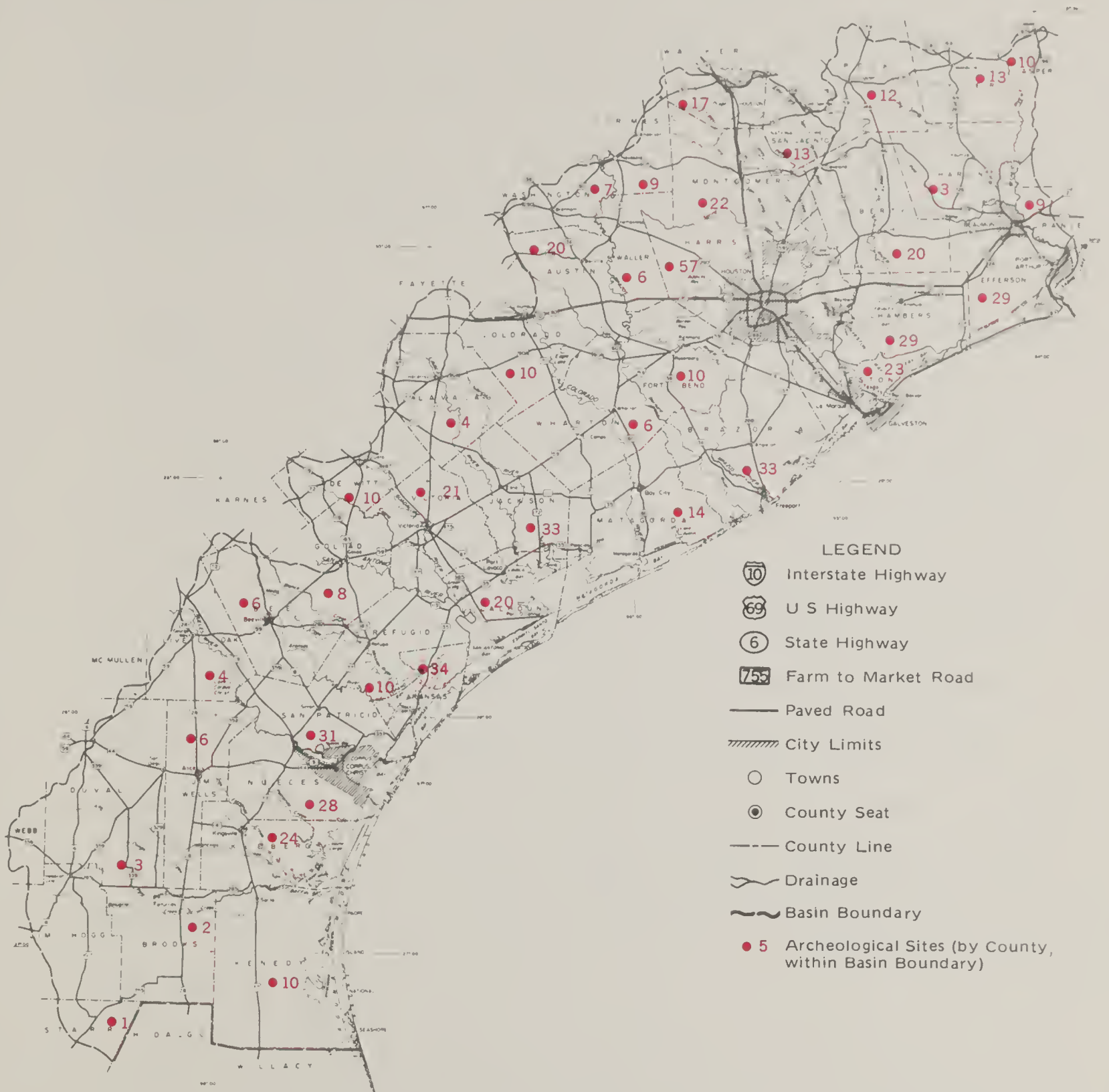
When studying all the recorded archeological sites (Plate 6) plotted to date one might postulate that the early inhabitants of Texas had strange customs. They camped in a narrow strip about 300 feet wide running from Brownsville to Beaumont. Evidently they were endeavoring to protect their heartland from an invasion by sea. Others of their countrymen sealed off major water sources such as Lake Corpus Christi and Palmetto Bend and Addicks reservoirs with rings of campsites in order to secure their water rights for whatever purpose. This may seem a little farfetched, but this is the picture that a first glance might evolve. We can see upon further examination that the narrow strip along the coast is only part of the Texas highway system which has been surveyed and the sites recorded by archeologists of the State Department of Highways and

Public Transportation. The reservoirs were not really "sealed off" by campsites because they did not exist in prehistory. It is just that the areas involved were surveyed and recorded prior to construction of the dams.

Now - what about the areas in between? These vast expanses of "clean paper" on the archeological maps are caught on the horns of the well known dilemma (between a rock and a hard place). Most of the energy and funds for archeological work is being expended in areas where sites are in immediate danger of being destroyed. The situation is exactly like that of a large jig-saw puzzle with a few key pieces in their proper position but with most of the intervening pieces missing. It is certainly the hope of all involved that some day these intervening pieces can be discovered and the entire puzzle "put together".

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The counties involved in the Texas Coastal Basins survey area were subjected to a records search to locate as many recorded historical and archeological sites as possible. Time and funds did not allow for any field work. All recorded sites identified during the survey were plotted on base maps for each county. Following the plotting each map was scrutinized to see whether any spatial patterning of sites existed. Because of the paucity of information and the



LEGEND

- Interstate Highway
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Farm to Market Road
- Paved Road
- City Limits
- Towns
- County Seat
- County Line
- Drainage
- Basin Boundary
- Archeological Sites (by County, within Basin Boundary)

Plate 6

DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED
ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES
(JUNE 1975)

TEXAS COASTAL BASINS

0 20 40 60 80 Miles
Approximate Scale
1:3,250,000



SOURCE: Data compiled by Texas Coastal
Basins Planning Staff.

DECEMBER 1975 4-R-35313

USDA-SCS-FORT WORTH, TEXAS 1976

APRIL 1971 4-R-28553-B

necessarily random sampling of past surveying procedures it would be presumptive at the very least to attempt the prediction of yet unrecorded sites over most of the areas. However, a few generalizations can be made and in the case of some specific projects it will probably be possible to make some meaningful predictions.

In general, the spatial patterning of aboriginal occupation should be governed by many of the same requirements of modern cultures. Food and water were the prime movers with shelter and availability of raw materials being also important. Practically all aboriginal inhabitants of this area were of the hunting and gathering variety. They were not sedentary village-dwellers or farmers, but were constantly on-the-move. Most of them made more-or-less "seasonal rounds" following game animals or maturing native flora. They seemed to prefer freshwater tributaries of major streams or springs as their prime source of water. Many of their campsites (of whatever longevity) will be found on prominent elevations, where possible, near these sources.

In the southern extension of the study area living conditions seem to have been particularly harsh. Historic accounts tell of a never-ending search for food and the use of questionable sources of water. Numerous temporary campsites are found in this region in locations that seem to be "miles from water" or sources of food. Of course, the aboriginal hunter must have used many sources unknown to us

today. One of the major drawbacks to archeological interpretation in this area is the poor preservation of floral and faunal remains in archeological sites.

Along the coast the picture was "good times and bad". During periods of favorable weather it was a veritable "seashore picnic". Fish, shellfish, and other marine edibles were plentiful, the need for shelter was minimal and brackish water did not seem to be a hindrance. However, during the season of hurricanes and blue northers a hasty withdrawal to the mainland was necessitated - sometimes too late. Archeological sites along the coast and coastal islands; however, seem to be even more transitory than those further inland. The ravages of wind and water have erased many of them from the archeological record and defaced most of those remaining.

In the central and northeastern sections subsistence must have been reasonably easy. Fish, game, and vegetal products were usually plentiful "close to home". Freshwater was available and materials for shelter construction were abundant. One of the main problems with site survey work in this area was the often overwhelming amount of ground cover. Most sites in East Texas are found along the coast or in areas of erosion or construction where the ground cover has been removed. It is assumed that aboriginal cultures utilized the vast areas of present day forests, but the sites have not been located mainly because of dense ground cover.

It is hoped that this information can be supplemented and updated in the future as more sites are discovered and recorded. We feel that this type information will be useful to those agencies, institutions, and others planning projects involving modification of the ground surface. In the past many sites have been destroyed and many projects delayed or abandoned completely which might have been prevented had this type information been available at an early stage in the planning process.

Data used in this survey were obtained principally from the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL), a branch of the University of Texas in Austin. TARL acts as a clearing house and repository for site recording and data storing for the entire State of Texas. Many archeologists and others avail themselves of this facility by recording sites discovered during field surveys with TARL.

Much of the data on historic sites in the study area were obtained from the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in Austin. THC is the State agency responsible for correlating the efforts of the County Historical Survey Committees. These local committees are endeavoring to identify, record, and preserve major historical sites in each county in Texas.

In Table 2, the sites are broke down into the following general categories:

Archeological Sites

Open Campsites - including multi-component sites, chipping stations, hearths, etc. as opposed to shelters and villages.

Midden - includes shell middens, refuse heaps, burned-rock middens, etc.

Quarry - includes those recorded specifically as quarries or lithic procurement sites.

Burial - those sites whose chief function seems to be the disposition of human remains.

Other - includes such sites as villages, mounds, shelters, and others which could not be classified by specific use category.

Historical Sites

Mission - those sites pertaining to missions and presidios.

Kiln - those sites where the primary function included the use of a kiln (brick, ceramic, lime, etc.).

TABLE 2
Distribution of Recorded Archeological and Historical Sites
Texas Coastal Basins

COUNTY	ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES					HISTORICAL SITES						TOTAL SITES
	Open Camp	Midden	Quarry	Burial	Other	Mission	Kiln	Cemetery	House Site	Town Site	Other	
Aransas	70	4		2					2	1	1	80
Austin	39	1		2					6	1		49
Bee	6						1		1	1		9
Brazoria	16	66		4	4			4	9	4	5	112
Brooks					2					1		3
Calhoun	5	24		1	8			2	1	3	1	45
Chambers	6	170		1	7	2				1	1	188
Colorado	43			1	2				2	1	3	52
DeWitt	83	8	68	2	5		1	6	37	2	4	216
Duval	4											4
Fayette	47	4	1	1	6				2	4	2	67
Fort Bend	1	1		2	9							13
Galveston	10	30		4	21				2	2		69
Goliad	3				3	4			1	1		12
Gonzales	73	1	32		1			10	25	1	2	150
Grimes	41			1					4		2	48
Hardin	3				1							4
Harris	120	117		4	29				1	2		273
Jackson	48	30			18		1	5	32	2	22	158
Jasper	49				10						1	60
Jefferson	6	33		1	1				1		2	44
Subtotal	678	489	101	26	127	6	3	27	126	27	46	1,656

TABLE 2 (cont'd)

Distribution of Recorded Archeological and Historical Sites

Texas Coastal Basins

COUNTY	ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES					HISTORICAL SITES						TOTAL SITES
	Open Camp	Midden	Quarry	Burial	Other	Mission	Kiln	Cemetery	House Site	Town Site	Other	
Jim Hogg												0
Jim Wells	7										1	8
Karnes	29					1						30
Kenedy	11										4	15
Kleberg	51	2		3	7						8	71
Lavaca		1		2							2	5
Liberty	15	3		3	12			1	1	2	3	40
Live Oak	52	6	3	3	6			1	2	1		74
Matagorda	12							2	4		5	23
Montgomery	42	3	1				1		2	1		50
McMullen	119	9	4		8			4	2	3	4	153
Nueces	85	11		18	30						2	146
Orange	17	52		1	1							71
Polk	101				10						1	112
Refugio	8	2				1			1			12
San Jacinto	111	1		2	18						2	134
San Patricio	53	24		4	31							112
Starr	97	1	10		33	2			4			147
Tyler	7			4	9				1		1	22
Victoria	26	2		2		3			2		1	36
Walker	21				22				1			44
Waller	3				7						1	11
Washington	7	2		2					3	1	1	16
Webb												0
Wharton	3	4			1					1		9
Subtotal	877	123	18	44	195	7	1	8	23	9	36	1,341
TOTAL	1,555	612	119	70	322	13	4	35	149	36	82	2,997

Source: Water Resources, SCS

Cemetery - self explanatory.

House-site - those sites which are recorded as being houses, house foundations, or suspected house-sites.

Town-site - self explanatory.

Other - included are such things as roads, trails, factories, forts, battleground, ferries, etc.

SUMMARY

In summary, it must be repeated that historical and archeological site reporting in Texas in the past has been a rather disjointed effort. Most surveys have been confined to areas of major earth-moving projects such as dams, highways, etc. At present there is a trend to attempt to tie everything together by surveys in the intervening void areas. It is hoped that this trend can gather momentum (and financial assistance) and result in meaningful interpretations of the life-ways of past cultures in order to render assistance to present and future societies.

The information contained in this report should be useful to those agencies, institutions, and individuals involved in major earth-moving projects in Texas. One of the major efforts of the report

is to locate areas of cultural value which might be involved in these projects at an early stage in the planning process in order that they might be better protected from damage by construction or related activities.

REFERENCES

- (1) Newcomb, W. W., Jr. The Indians of Texas, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1961.
- (2) Place, Marion T. Comanches and Other Indians of Texas, Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc., New York, 1970.
- (3) Berlandier, Jean Louis. The Indians of Texas in 1830, Smithsonian Institute Press, Washington, 1969.
- (4) Inglis, Jack M. A History of Vegetation on the Rio Grande Plain, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Austin, Texas, 1964.
- (5) Gould, F. W. Texas Plants--A Checklist and Ecological Summary, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, 1962.
- (6) Hester, T. R. and T. C. Hill, Jr. Prehistoric Occupation at the Holdsworth and Stewart Sites, Rio Grande Plain of Texas, Bulletin of the Texas Archeological Society, 43:33-65, 1972.
- (7) Hester, T. R. and Feris A. Bass, Jr. An Archeological Survey of Portions of the Chiltipin-San Fernando Creeks Watershed, Jim Wells County, Texas, UTSA Archeological Report No. 4, 1974.
- (8) Bolton, Herbert Eugene. Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century, University of Texas Press, Austin and London. Originally published in 1915 as Volume 3 of University of California Publications in History, 1970.
- (9) Pool, William C. A Historical Atlas of Texas, Encino Press, Austin, 1975.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY



1022247787

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY



1022247787